

October 22, 2008 Fall KEEC Council Meeting Minutes

- **Members Present:** Horace Brown, Evelyn Morgan, Allen Branscum, Cheryl Messenger, Greg Higdon
- **Staff present:** Jane Eller, Michelle Nevels, Maria Zoretic
- **Guests:** Glenna Goins, Governor's Office of Policy Management

Meeting was opened by Chairman, Horace Brown. Mr. Brown welcomed everyone and asked for approval of the minutes. Ms. Messenger moved to approve the minutes from the July 2008 meeting, Mr. Branscum seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Brown asked Ms. Eller to proceed through the agenda.

Master Plan Update: Ms. Eller explained that the agency is mandated to create a plan for improving environmental literacy in the Commonwealth; to update that plan regularly; and to send the completed plan to the General Assembly. The first such plan was created in 1999, revised in 2004 and must be revised again in 2009. A meeting will be held immediately before the January Council meeting on January 28, 2009 to begin this process and all Council members are encouraged to attend if schedules allow.

State Environmental Literacy Plan for NCLI: KEEC is developing a state environmental literacy plan regarding the No Child Left Inside Act, which passed the House earlier this year and is expected to pass the Senate next year. The NCLB Act is designed to reintroduce environmental education into state curriculums. The No Child Left Behind Act put such a strong emphasis on reading and math that science, social studies and especially interdisciplinary studies such as EE are taught much less than previously.

The current bill, NCLI, will provide a total of \$100,000,000 nationally to improve EE. This money will pass through each state department of education (in those states who have submitted approved plans). Part of the master plan process will be to create this plan. Ms. Eller has already begun talking to the Department of Ed about this.

Survey of Environmental Knowledge, attitudes and Behaviors: Along with the master plan, the KEEC is also mandated to assess the environmental literacy of Kentuckians and report those results as well to the General Assembly. We will once again be working with the UK Survey Research Center on this, plus we are partnering with Bluegrass PRIDE (which is also conducting a survey this year) to help reduce costs for both agencies

Green Schools: As of this date, KEEC has 78 schools participating in G&HS. With Maria leaving, the G&HS program is somewhat up in the air. We have been employing Ms. Zoretic as a full time, temporary employee and have asked that her position be made permanent. This would give the Council three positions. Until that person is hired, Ms. Eller will administer the Green and Healthy Schools Program and Ms. Nevels will oversee the EEinKentucky Website.

Certification: Ms. Eller reported that the certification program continues to do well. With the graduation of this year's class, we will have 115 grads. Earlier in the year, we had planned to apply for accreditation of the program with NAAEE but it turns out that NAAEE is not yet ready for states to apply. At present, they have set an application fee of \$10,000 which is out of our range.

MS4 Funding: Funding for the storm water education program currently funded at \$250,000 by the Transportation Cabinet is still up in the air. KYTC goes back and forth over whether they will pick it up next year. We have discussed with Dr. Meichtry and Ms. Gee the possibility of approaching the League of Cities or the Phase Two communities themselves to see if they would like to continue the program.

KUPEE Funding: The universities have submitted one application for the Pride funding this year (although each will still do a different project and each will require a separate MOA). Each MOA will total about \$21,300. UofL and UK have unexpended funds from the 2007 MOA and are requesting that they send the money back (as unexpended) and that we include it in this year's MOA. Ms. Eller will talk to the Education Cabinet lawyers about this and get back to the Council members. Pride Fund interest in dropping during fiscal year 07 and 08. Probably will be low in 08-09. Dr. Melinda Wilder from ECU is organizing the KUPEE members to write a collaborative NSF grant.

Coal Education: Ms. Eller has spent a very significant amount of time this year advising the Coal Education Program on creating more transparent and balanced grant distribution guidelines. She has also recommended that the Coal Education Program hire an outside evaluator to review past grants and make suggestions for the future of the program.

First Lady's website: Mrs. Jane Beshear requested that KEEC staff create a set of homeowners inventories based on the Green Schools inventories. Staff has completed those and, when the first lady has released them, we will put them on our website as well.

Questing: Agency staff are organizing federal, state and local parks, as well as nature centers and other organizations to do a statewide questing program as a way to get families outside to learn about their environment. More on that in January.

There being no more old or new business, Mr. Brown adjourned the meeting.